

Rural District Council
of Cheltenham

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR

1937

CHELTENHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health :

STEPHEN KNIGHT, M.B., B.S. (LOND.), M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Whole time, combined district.

(Commenced duties 1st April, 1937.)

Sanitary Inspector :

E. H. ROSSER, Certified Sanitary Inspector.

Certified Inspector of Meats and Foods.

Additional Sanitary Inspector :

L. GROGAN, Certified Sanitary Inspector.

Temporary Additional Sanitary Inspector :

F. H. LEWIS, Certified Sanitary Inspector.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Cheltenham
Rural District Council.*

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Annual Report on the health and sanitary circumstances of the district for 1937.

The year has been a healthy one as will be gathered from the vital statistics and comments thereon.

On 1st October the P.H.A. 1936 came into force. Section 269 of this Act contains some entirely new Legislation of great importance to a rural district such as the Cheltenham Rural District. The section authorizes local authorities to control holiday camping and directs them to grant licences where land is used for this purpose in excess of 42 consecutive days, or 60 days in any 12 consecutive months.

The open air life of camping is of great benefit to health, but it is essential that elementary requirements in regard to water supply and sanitation are complied with.

The conditions attached to a licence are directed to this end and will benefit the camper and public alike.

Housing work has occupied a great deal of your officers time in an endeavour to complete the building programme before 31st December, 1938, when a change in the rate of subsidy takes place.

I take this opportunity of thanking the Members of the Council, Mr. Rosser and other members of the staff for their help and co-operation during the year.

I have the honour to be,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

June, 1938.

STEPHEN KNIGHT.

Cheltenham Rural District Council

SECTION A

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area

Area (in acres)	..	..	..	..	..	..	81,940
Registrar General's estimate of Resident Population (mid. 1937)	..	..	..	..	..	..	15,130
Number of Inhabited Houses (end 1937) according to Rate Books	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,959
Rateable Value	..	..	..	..	..	..	£85,838
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	..	..	..	..	..	£336	8s. od.

Extracts from Vital Statistics of the Year 1937.

			Total	Males	Females
LIVE BIRTHS	{ Legitimate	..	198	102	96
	{ Illegitimate	..	14	7	7

BIRTH RATE per 1,000 of the estimated resident population : 14.0.

STILL BIRTHS	{ Legitimate	..	6	1	5
	{ Illegitimate	..	—	—	—

Rate per 1,000 total (live and still births) : 27.5.

DEATHS	211	98	113
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DEATH RATE per 1,000 of the estimated resident population : 14.0.

Comparability factor for the area	0.79
Corrected Death Rate (14.0 × 0.79)	..	..	..	11.1

Deaths from puerperal causes :

			Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births.
No. 29.	Puerperal Sepsis	..	0	—
No. 30.	Other Puerperal causes	..	1	4.6
		..	—	—
	Total	..	1	4.6
		..	—	—

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age :—

All Infants per 1,000 live births	..	..	..	42.4
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	..	..	..	42.6
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	..	..	..	71
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	..	..	..	31
„ „ Measles (all ages)	..	..	..	0
„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)	..	..	..	0
„ „ Diarrhoea (under two years of age)	..	..	..	0

Death Rate

There were 211 deaths of persons ordinarily resident in the district as compared with 242 during the previous year. The death rate for the year was 14.0, but for purposes of comparison the recorded death rate 14.0 should be multiplied by a Comparability Factor which for this area is 0.79 to give a corrected death rate of 11.1.

The corrected death rate 11.1 is the death rate which would have occurred had the age and sex distribution of the district been the same as the country as a whole. The corrected death rate for the area, 11.1, compares favourably with the death rate for England and Wales, 12.4.

Diseases of the heart and circulatory system accounted for 76 deaths and cancer 31 deaths; these numbers are not exceptional in an area where there is a relatively high proportion of elderly people.

Birth Rate

212 births were registered in the year, an increase of 18 over the previous year. The birth rate for the year was 14.0 as compared with 14.9 for England and Wales and a rate of 12.7 for this area during 1936.

The slight increase in the birth rate is in marked contrast to the trend of the last half century, which has seen a fall in the birth rate from 35.4 to 14.4. There are far fewer potential parents being born to-day and the size of population is temporarily maintained by more people living on into old age.

Infantile Mortality

Nine infants died before reaching the age of one year, giving an infantile mortality rate of 42, which compares favourably with a rate of 67 for the previous year and a rate of 58 for England and Wales.

The whole of these nine deaths took place in the neo-natal period or during the first month of life. Congenital debility, prematurity and deformities account for eight of these deaths, while the remaining one was due to violence.

A welcome feature in the health of the people during the present century has been the great decline in the infantile mortality rate and is due to the care taken of the infant and his food. This care does not make itself felt in the first month of life. It is the deaths during the neo-natal period which form the hard core of the infantile mortality and has shown very little improvement.

The death of the infant in the first month of life is in many cases bound up with the death or illness of the mother. Regular ante-natal care and readily available skilled assistance during confinement will not only prevent death or chronic ill health in the mother but also save the lives of many young infants.

Maternal Mortality

There was one maternal death as compared with three last year.

Cancer

Deaths from cancer amounted to 31 or 14.5 per cent of the total deaths. The corresponding figures for 1936 were 34 or 14.7 per cent.

For comparative purposes this figure of 31 gives a crude mortality rate of 2,040 per million as compared with a crude mortality of 1,625 per million of the population for England and Wales in 1936. The excess is accounted for by the greater proportion of elderly people in this area than in the country as a whole.

The accompanying table, compiled locally, shows the frequency with which the various organs are attacked and the ages at which death occurred.

SITE	AGE AND SEX PERIODS						TOTALS	
	Under 25	25-35	35-45	45-55	55-65	65 and up		
	M F	M F	M F	M F	M F	M F	M F	Both Sexes
Jaw, Face and Ear								
Tongue and Mouth	—							
Larynx, Pharynx and Neck						2	2	2
Lungs					I	2	3	3
Breast				I	I	I	3	3
Stomach and Oesophagus. .				I	2 I	3	6 I	7
Liver and Gall Bladder ..								
Intestines and Rectum ..			I	I	2	4 4	5 7	12
Pancreas					I		I	I
Uterus								
Ovaries and Vagina								
Bones								
Kidneys, Prostate Bladder.						I	I	I
Otherwise specified					I	I	I I	2
Totals	M F		I	I 2	4 5	10 8	16 15	31

Birth-rates, Death-rates, Analysis of Mortality, Maternal Death-rates, and Case-rates for certain Infectious Diseases in the year 1937.	}	England and Wales, London, 125 Great Towns and 148 Smaller Towns
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(Provisional Figures based on Weekly and Quarterly Returns)

	England and Wales	125 County Boro's and Great Towns including London	148 Smaller Towns (Resident Populations 25,000 to 50,000 at 1931 Census)	London Adminis- trative County	Cheltenham Rural District
Rates per 1,000 Population.					
Births :—					
Live	14.9	14.9	15.3	13.3	14.00
Still	0.60	0.67	0.64	0.54	0.4
Deaths :—					
All Causes	12.4	12.5	11.9	12.3	14.0
Typhoid and Paratyphoid fevers	0.00	0.01	0.00	Corrected 0.00	11.1 —
Smallpox	—	—	—	—	—
Measles	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.00
Scarlet fever ..	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00
Whooping cough	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.06	0.00
Diphtheria	0.07	0.08	0.05	0.05	0.00
Influenza	0.45	0.39	0.42	0.38	0.33
Violence	0.54	0.45	0.42	0.51	0.47
Notifications :—					
Smallpox	0.00	—	0.00	—	—
Scarlet fever ..	2.33	2.56	2.42	2.09	0.73
Diphtheria	1.49	1.81	1.38	1.93	0.07
Enteric fever ..	0.05	0.06	0.04	0.05	0.07
Erysipelas	0.37	0.43	0.34	0.44	0.27
Pneumonia	1.36	1.58	1.20	1.18	0.27
Rates per 1,000 Live Births.					
Deaths under 1 year of age	58	62	55	60	42.4
Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years of age ..	5.8	7.9	3.2	12.0	—
Maternal Mortality :—					
Puerperal Sepsis. .	0.97	} Not available			0.00
Others	2.26				4.80
Total	3.23				4.80
Rates per 1,000 Total Births (i.e. Live and Still).					
Maternal Mortality :—					
Puerperal Sepsis. .	0.94	} Not available			—
Others	2.17				4.6
Total	3.11				4.6
Notifications :—					
Puerperal fever ..	} 13.93	17.95	11.52	4.15	0.00
Puerperal pyrexia				14.34	0.00

The Registrar General's Short Table of the Causes of Death corrected for outward and inward transfers.

CAUSES.						NUMBER.		
						Males.	Females.	Total.
6.	Influenza	..	..	..	..	5	0	5
9.	Tuberculosis of respiratory system	..	..	..	..	5	4	9
10.	Other tuberculosis	..	..	..	..	0	1	1
11.	Syphilis	..	..	..	..	0	0	0
13.	Cancer	..	..	..	..	15	16	31
14.	Diabetes	..	..	..	..	0	3	3
15.	Cerebral Hæmorrhage	..	..	..	..	7	7	14
16.	Heart Disease	..	..	..	..	31	31	62
18.	Other circulatory diseases	..	..	..	..	4	3	7
19.	Bronchitis	..	..	..	..	1	0	1
20.	Pneumonia (all forms)	..	..	..	..	3	3	6
21.	Other respiratory diseases	..	..	..	..	1	2	3
22.	Peptic Ulcer	..	..	..	..	2	1	3
24.	Appendicitis	..	..	..	..	0	1	1
26.	Other liver diseases	..	..	..	..	0	1	1
27.	Other digestive diseases	..	..	..	..	3	4	7
28.	Acute and chronic nephritis	..	..	..	..	3	5	8
29.	Puerperal sepsis	..	..	..	..	0	0	0
30.	Other puerperal diseases	..	..	..	..	0	1	1
31.	Congenital debility, prematurity and deformities	..	..	..	..	4	4	8
32.	Senility	..	..	..	..	8	18	26
33.	Suicide	..	..	..	..	0	0	0
34.	Other Violence	..	..	..	..	2	5	7
35.	Other defined diseases	..	..	..	..	4	3	7
TOTAL						98	113	211

SECTION B

General Provision of Health Services for the Area

1.—(a) Laboratory Facilities

Under arrangement made by the Gloucestershire County Council, sputum, swabs, and other pathological material are examined at the Cheltenham General Hospital.

(b) Ambulance Facilities

(i) Infectious Cases

The ambulance is provided by the Delancey Isolation Hospital.

(ii) Other Cases

The Council have entered into an agreement with the Cheltenham Ambulance Association to serve the whole of the area. The service will be adequate.

(c) *Nursing in the Home*

The whole area is covered by the District Nursing Associations.

(d) *Treatment Centres and Clinics*

Child Welfare meetings are held at the following time and places.

Wednesday :	Alderton (1)	..	..	..	2.30 p.m.
	Prestbury (1 and 3)	..	..	..	2.30 p.m.
	Shurdington (1 and 3)	..	..	..	2.30 p.m.
	Winchcomb (2)	..	..	..	2.30 p.m.
Friday :	Stanton (2)	..	..	..	3 p.m.

Clinics are held at the Cheltenham and Tewkesbury hospitals for ophthalmic, orthopaedic and tuberculous cases.

(e) *Hospitals*

(i) Cases other than Smallpox : The Delancey Isolation Hospital, Cheltenham.

(ii) Smallpox cases : Delancey Hospital for Smallpox at Longhill, Elmstone Hardwicke.

SECTION C

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area

(i) *Water*

Existing mains were extended at (1) Southam, 150 yards of 3-inch main being laid ; (2) Winchcomb, 100 yards of 3-inch main being laid.

The Council also entered into negotiations to purchase the Toddington Water Supply, formerly owned by the Toddington Manor Estate.

There are seventeen independent piped supplies in the area, and of these six are owned by the Council. In addition to the piped supplies there are six public pumps or wells.

Periodic analyses of the various supplies are essential besides the routine inspection of the gathering grounds.

In order that more frequent analyses of the various supplies may be carried out, the Council have guaranteed a quota of 100 samples per annum to the County Council under a proposed scheme. The County Council's scheme greatly increases the facilities for the examination of samples.

Number of new connections with the public supply	..	101
Number of wells sunk or improved sources of supply	..	4
Number of wells closed	.. .. .	0
Number of samples taken for examination	.. ..	10

The samples taken of the Council's supplies showed the water to be of satisfactory quality.

(ii) Drainage and Sewerage

The scheme for providing Alderton and Gretton with sewers and disposal works was commenced during the year.

A scheme is in the course of preparation for providing sewage disposal works at Greet in the parish of Winchcomb.

There is need for a sewerage system in the following areas : Gotherington ; Kidnapper's Lane, Leckhampton ; Newtown, Toddington ; and Coberley.

Number of houses newly connected with sewers	..	57
„ w.c.'s newly supplied with flushing cisterns		21
„ with closets, pail closets, or improved privies constructed	.. .. .	7
„ notices served to empty " Privy Vaults "	..	0
„ " Privy Vaults " abolished	.. .. .	16

(iii) Public Cleansing

Refuse Collection and Disposal

House refuse is collected by the Council in Prestbury, Leckhampton and Winchcomb. During the year this service was extended to Woodmancote. Private contractors collect the house refuse at Southam and Shurdington.

A scheme for the collection to be made throughout the area by the Council was considered, but it was not found possible to inaugurate the service during the year under review.

Disposal is by controlled tipping at sites adjacent to the centres of population.

(iv) Sanitary Inspection of the Area

Numbers inspected of each of the following :

	No. on Register.	No. Inspected.	Total No. of Inspections.
Common Lodging Houses	.. .. .	—	—
Slaughter Houses	.. .. .	6	253
Bakehouses	.. .. .	6	18
Dairies, Cowsheds, Milkshops	.. 313	300	410
Workshops and Factories	.. 15	15	37
Residences of outworkers	.. 1	1	1

General

(a) Number of complaints received	.. .. .	16
(b) Number of nuisances reported to District Council :		
(1) Total	.. .. .	4
(2) Swine	.. .. .	4
(c) Total number of nuisances abated	.. .. .	16
(d) Total number of preliminary notices served	.. .. .	16
(e) Total number of statutory notices served	.. .. .	4

(f)	Total number of summonses taken out	..	..	0
(g)	Total number of convictions	..	..	0
(h)	Number of houses disinfected	..	..	11
(i)	Methods of disinfection used: Infectious Disease— Formalin Spray and Lamp.			

(v) Shops

No action was taken under the Shops Act, 1934.

(vi) Swimming Baths and Pools

A swimming pool in Winchcomb is administered by the Parish Council. The water is undergoing continuous change and the bath is cleaned out yearly. A swimming pool at Stanton is run by a local parish committee.

(vii) Smoke Abatement

One complaint was received and five observations were made. No nuisance was seen and the complainant has since written stating that there is no further cause for complaint.

(viii) Eradication of Bed Bugs

Number of Council Houses found to be infested	..	..	0
Number of other houses found to be infested	..	..	3
Number of houses disinfected	..	..	3

Disinfection is carried out by direct labour and the method in use is spraying with an insecticide followed by fumigation with "Cimex."

(ix) Schools

No proper water supply has been found for Bentham school, but in a short time a piped supply will be brought sufficiently near to connect to the school.

The schools are visited by the Medical Officer of Health upon the serious outbreak of infectious disease. At the end of the year the Council had under consideration a scheme for immunization against diphtheria.

SECTION D

Housing

The survey of working class houses showed that there were 145 houses in the area unfit for human habitation. During the year under review 90 of these houses were dealt with. Public inquiries were held in respect of 15 clearance areas involving 59 houses. The remaining 31 came before the Council as individual unfit houses; demolition orders were made on 18, and undertakings to render the house fit or to cease to use it as a dwelling house were accepted in 13 cases.

New houses erected during the year :—

(a) Total (including numbers given separately under (b) ..	101
(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts :	
(1) By the Local Authority	31
(2) By other bodies or persons	0
(c) Proposed under the Housing Acts	119

1. *Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the Year :—*

1 (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ..	1,194
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	2,586
2 (a) Number of dwelling-houses (including under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 ..	1,194
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	2,586
3. Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	145
4. Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	685

2. *Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of formal Notices :—*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	18
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3. *Action under Statutory Powers during the Year :—*

(a) Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	2
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—	
(a) By owners	2
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners..	0
(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	0

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—	
(a) By owners	0
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners..	0
(c) Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made.. ..	18
(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	22
(3) Undertakings accepted by Council at final proceedings under section 11	13
(4) The Council made Clearance Orders in 15 areas—59 houses. Ministry's decision not reached before end of year.	
(d) Proceeding under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—	
(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	0
(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	0

4. *Housing Act, 1936 (Part IV)—Overcrowding :—*

(a) (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	21
(ii) Number of families dwelling therein	21
(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein	122
(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during year	1
(c) (i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	40
(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases.. ..	184
(d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding..	0
(e) Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding conditions upon which the Medical Officer of Health may consider it desirable to report.	

In some cases where the Council built big houses to accommodate the overcrowded cases, the families moved to other accommodation and difficulty was experienced in finding families of suitable size for the new houses.

SECTION F

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and other Diseases

DISEASE	Total Cases Notified	Other diseases. Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Small Pox	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	11	6	0
Diphtheria	1	1	0
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid) ..	1	1	0
Puerperal Fever	0	0	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	0	0	0
Pneumonia	4	0	6
Other diseases generally notifiable:—			
Erysipelas	4	1	0
Other diseases locally notifiable	0	0	0

One child who was to undergo an operation for tonsillectomy was found to be a carrier of virulent diphtheria, so arrangements were made for the operation to be performed in the Delancey Hospital. Following tonsillectomy the carrier condition cleared up. This case is not included in the above table.

The district was remarkably free from all forms of notifiable disease. The notification rate per 1,000 of the population for scarlet fever was only 0.73 as compared with a rate of 2.33 for the country as a whole. The rate for diphtheria 0.07 compared with 1.49.

The case of typhoid occurred in a nurse who developed the disease in this area shortly after nursing a patient with typhoid elsewhere.

Tuberculosis. 1937.

Age Periods.	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1 .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
5	1	2	2	2	..	..	..	..
15	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
25	4	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
35	1	2	..	1	..	..	..	..
45	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
55 .. .. .	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
65 and upwards ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	9	7	2	3	5	4	0	1

Early notification of tuberculous cases is imperative if there is to be a hope of cure. No action can be taken by the tuberculosis service until they have been acquainted with a case by notification.

Therefore in all cases dying before being notified are investigated as to the reason for non notification.

Prevention of Blindness

No action was taken under section 66 Public Health Act, 1925.

Meat

There are six slaughter houses in the area and 253 visits were made by the Inspectors during the year at or shortly after slaughtering. The following is a summary of the meat condemned.

Carcases Inspected and Condemned

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed (if known)	—	—	—	—	—
Number Inspected	140		18	144	212
All diseases except Tuberculosis. Whole Carcases condemned	—	—	—		4
Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned	3		—	2	2
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis	2.14%		—	1.39	2.6%
Tuberculosis only : Whole carcases condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned	7	—	—	—	12
Percentage of number inspected affected with tuberculosis	5.0%	—	—	—	5.66%

Slaughter of Animals Act, 1933

There are 18 licensed slaughtermen in the district.

Milk

(1) Farms and Dairies registered	313
(2) Premises newly registered or changed hands	7
(3) Number ceased milk trade.. ..	0
(4) Visits paid to Dairy premises	410
(5) Number of Cowsheds provided with impervious floors and channels	7
(6) Number of Dairies provided or improved	9
(7) Improved drainage to cowsheds	7

- (8) Improved approaches to cowsheds 7
 (9) Improved lighting to cowsheds 7

Two samples were taken apart from those under the accredited milk scheme.

There are 34 producers of accredited milk and 10 producers of "T.T." milk in the area.

Factories, Workshops and Workplaces

1. Inspection of Factories, Workshops and Workplaces

PREMISES (1)	Number of		
	Inspections (2)	Written Notices (3)	Occupier Prosecuted (4)
Factories (including Factory Laundries) ..	6	—	—
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries)	31	—	—
Work places (other than Outworkers' premises)	—	—	—
Total	37	—	—

2. Defects found in Factories, Workshops, and Work places.

Particulars (1)	Number of Defects			Number of offences in respect to which Prosecutions were instituted (5)
	Found (2)	Remedied (3)	Reported to M.H. Inspector (4)	
Nuisances under Public Health Acts	—	—	—	—
Want of Cleanliness	—	—	—	—
Want of Ventilation	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—
Want of drainage of floors ..	—	—	—	—
Other Nuisances	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Accommodation :				
Insufficient Accommodation .	—	—	—	—
Unsuitable or defective ..	—	—	—	—
Not separate for sexes.. ..	—	—	—	—
Offences under the Factor and Workshops Acts ..	—	—	—	—
Illegal occupation of underground Bakehouse (S. 10)	—	—	—	—
Other offences (excluding offences relating to outwork and offences under the Sections mentioned in the Schedule to the Ministry of Health (Factory and Workshops Transfer of Powers) Order, 1921 ..	—	—	—	—
Total	—	—	—	—

